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S P E E C H
OF
HON. H. C. BURNETT, OF KENTUCKY,
ON
THE SUBJECT OF NATIONAL POLITICS.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, JULY 28, 1856.

The House being in the Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union—

Mr. BURNETT said :

Mr. CHAIRMAN : Until the past few days I had determined not to occupy the time of the House with any remarks from me at this session. But, sir, the fearful issues which certain political parties have precipitated upon the country in the present presidential contest warn me that this is not the time for a representative of the people to be silent.

We have now, Mr. Chairman, the anomalous aspect of three political parties presenting candidates for the highest office in the gift of the people. One of the parties, the republican party, has the entirety of its organization at the North. It is emphatically a sectional party. The convention which presented its candidates was sectional, having within its numbers no member from the South, unless a few stray abolitionists, who were there from my State and Virginia, could be galvanized by its powers, lacking constituencies, into the dignity of delegates. It is, then, a sectional party, as are its candidates sectional, banded together to wage an unholy war against the integrity of the constitution, and to commit wanton aggressions on the South.

Such, sir, is the infamy of their purpose. I shall strip the wolves of their sheep's clothing, and expose them in all their naked deformity to the penetration of the public gaze. They are keeping up agitation by all manner of means, legitimate and illegitimate, to elevate to the highest point the inflammable nature of the public mind at the North, that, in the insanity of action arising from such a condition, they may elevate their candidates to the high places in the temple. They have been clamoring about violations of plighted faith, sacredness of compacts, compacts consecrated by the sanction of the great statesmen of the country, and all such sentimentality as that. Sir, I deny that the Missouri Compromise was a compact. A compact is a mutual agreement between nations or States. The so-called Compromise of 1820 possessed no such element of sanctity.

Let us see what the history of that compromise was.

In 1819 Missouri applied for admission into the Union, with slavery sanctioned by her constitution. When a bill admitting her came before the House, the North placed upon it a condition abolishing slavery. It went to the Senate, and the restriction was stricken out. A disagreement ensued between the houses, and the bill was lost. In 1820 Missouri renewed her application, and the same condition abolishing slavery was applied in the House. About the same time a bill passed the House admitting Maine without a restriction, which went to the Senate, and was amended by a committee of that body so as to admit Missouri without any restriction. An effort to strike out this amendment of the committee in the Senate failed. At that point, Mr. Thomas, a senator from Illinois, introduced the celebrated Missouri restriction, which prevailed, and thus amended the bill went to the House. There the majority from the North refused to concur in the Senate's amendment, and insisted upon the clause prohibiting slavery. A conference committee was appointed, and they reported, as a compromise, that Missouri should be admitted without any slavery restriction, and that the amendment offered by Mr. Thomas, of Illinois, should be adopted. Eighty-seven out of one hundred and one northern votes were cast in this House against this proposition admitting Missouri, and it failed. Finally, however, an act was passed authorizing the people of Missouri to form a State constitution precedent to its entrance into the Union, with a qualification prohibiting slavery in the territory north of 36 deg. 30 min. Missouri formed such a constitution; and as soon as she applied for admission, the North refused to admit her on the miserable pretext that her constitution prohibited the immigration of free negroes within her limits. It was then that the measure of 1821, introduced by Mr. Clay, was passed, admitting her upon the provisions of the fundamental act last mentioned, providing that no law should be passed by Missouri excluding any citizen from the enjoyment of any of the privileges or immunities to which a citizen is entitled under the constitution. Thus, Mr. Chairman, was Missouri admitted as a State.

How, then, sir, can any man stultify common sense by declaring the act of 1820, commonly known as the Missouri Compromise, a compact? It was passed against the vote of eighty-seven northern men on this floor. The few from that section who voted for it were consigned to the unwelcome depths of political graves. It had in its initiation or consummation none of the elements of a compact. Who were the parties to it? The North and South were then the conflicting contestants. The North did not agree to it as a unit, and without such unity the South could not be expected to regard it as a compact. But, gentlemen of the North, if it was so sacred a compact—so great a pledge of faith, how was it that your section violated it the year after its passage? Your predecessors in this hall voted against it, and, sacred as you claim it to have been, would not admit Missouri under it. A supplemental law became necessary, which, imposing new conditions upon the admission of Missouri, changed the original fundamental act which contained this Missouri Compromise, and thus virtually vitiated any claims it might have had upon the perpetual regard of the South had the admission been unconditional under it.

To show, sir, that the North never regarded this act of 1820 as a compromise, we have only to refer to its conduct in 1850, when legislation became necessary for the new territories acquired by the Mexican war. It refused then to regard this act as a compact, or even to admit its being looked upon in the light they now claim for it. Yes, sir, when the country was agitated from its circumference to its centre, and the pulse of the nation beat with anxiety—when a "Mount Ararat" was looked for eagerly, upon which the ark of the covenant might rest with safety, and the clouds of disunion hung portentously above us—the North refused to apply the healing effects of this so much now extolled compromise as a balm to the five bleeding wounds which Mr. Clay then so eloquently described the country as suffering from.

Then it was, sir, that the patriots in Congress, seeing the impending danger, which the North refused to avert by carrying out this now sacred compact, inaugurated the principle contained in the compromise measures of 1850, to restore peace to a distracted country, and which virtually abrogated the principle of the Missouri act. The principle of those measures was then again initiated as new, but it was not new, sir; it was the corner-stone principle upon which the fathers of the republic built our government—the principle of the capacity of man for self-government. The principle contained in these measures, vitiating that claimed to have been established by the act of 1820, was endorsed by the true men of the country everywhere. It was endorsed by the whig and democratic parties of the country in their National Conventions. It was endorsed by their candidates, President Pierce and General Scott. It was endorsed by the people almost unanimously in every State of the Union, at the election in 1852; for every one of the States voted for one or the other of these candidates standing upon this principle.

Mr. Chairman, soon after this, a necessity arose for legislation relative to the territory lying west of the Missouri, which we had acquired by the Louisiana purchase. It was natural—nay, sir, it was the duty of Congress, in the formation of territorial governments for the Territories of Kansas and Nebraska, to make the basis of the bill the principle which had thus been so universally approved by the nation. Congress enacted them containing the very same principles embraced in the compromise measures of 1850, and declaring, in distinct terms, what had been virtually done and sanctioned before; that the Missouri Compromise was thereby repealed, thus leaving the question with the people, to be decided by them as in their judgment might seem best, when, after reaching maturity, they could properly be considered fit for a State organization. Can there be any fairer principle than this—to let the people of the North and the South quietly emigrate into the Territory and settle the question of slavery for themselves, not by force of arms, but through that silent, but arbitrary instrument, the ballot, in the election of their delegates to form a State constitution? And yet, sir, fair as was this proposition, just as it was, consonant as it was with the great element of our republican government, and responsive as it was to the will of the people, expressed in the presidential election of 1852, it was seized upon by designing and wicked men North to arouse a factious agitation throughout the North, which is at this time rapidly increasing. Members of the very Congress which made this bill a law, in disrespect of public decency, in violation of the spirit of our constitution, disregarding what ought to be the duty of every good citizen and of law-makers, sworn to support the constitution of the United States, which ought at least to have prompted them not to be law-breakers, inaugurated at this very Capitol a society for the purpose of defeating the object of the Kansas and Nebraska law, and of preventing a peaceful contest between the legitimate citizens of Kansas as to what their policy relative to slavery should be.

We have heard, sir, a great deal about the outrages in Kansas, about the invasion of the ballot-box, the murder of peaceful citizens, the mobbing of others, the destruction of printing presses, the burning of public houses, the sacking of the town of Lawrence, and the other scenes of outrage alleged to have been committed there. I know nothing about the facts in the case; but I say, upon the heads of NATHANIEL P. BANKS, DANIEL MACE, J. Z. GOODRICH, and the other initiators of the Emigrant Aid Societies, rests all the blood that has been shed, and all the responsibility of the outrages which it is alleged have been committed in Kansas. They were the inaugurateors of the system which resulted in the present condition of things in that Territory. What did they do? They met in Washington, formed an Emigrant Aid Society, contributed their money to pour into that Territory a number of free-State men to

defeat the healthy exercise, by the *bona fide* settlers, of the privileges conferred on them by the territorial bill, in order that they might make Kansas free—right or wrong. From this inauguration of the system of Emigrant Aid Societies, and its recommendations, resulted all the like societies in the North, and the master-spirit of them all, the Emigrant Aid Society of Massachusetts. Gain, they say, was one of the incentives of their moneyed contribution to its purposes. That is a shallow subterfuge for their illegal attempts to control affairs in Kansas. But if such was really their motives, it but sinks them deeper in infamy—evidencing, as it does that, in conjunction with their illegal purpose of controlling the future destinies of that Territory, the love of filthy lucre added an additional leverage to their movements.

But, sir, they not only carried out the formation of these societies in the States, but the free-State men banded together in the Territory in exclusive organizations for the purpose of making Kansas free. Was it not natural, then, that southern men should combine to resist these outside, united with inside, attempts to prevent them from enjoying their rights in Kansas? How dare the instigators of these movements condemn the South for resisting their illegal purposes to force a character of institution upon Kansas which would preclude them from enjoying their property in it for all time to come? From the conduct of those northern men who started these Emigrant Aid Societies resulted the excited state of affairs in Kansas. They began it, and they must bear the responsibility of it—not the South. They not only engaged in these illegal attempts to control, by outside organizations, the ballot-box in that Territory, but they counseled treason against its regularly-organized government. Those who were sent there by the Emigrant Aid Societies carried with them a feeling of opposition towards the territorial government which utterly incapacitated them to be law-abiding citizens of Kansas. Under the lead of Reeder, Lane, Robinson, and others, who received their instructions to keep up agitation at all hazards, they soon burst out in open treason against the territorial government, and the authority of the United States; held elections on other than those days fixed by the regularly-constituted authorities, and formed a State constitution, consulting in such formation not the entire people of the Territory, but only their own partisans. And yet, sir, we find the republicans from the North, on this floor—these men who are so horror-stricken by what they call outrages, who profess themselves to be so desirous of restoring peace to a distracted country, and of vindicating the purity of the ballot-box in Kansas, passing a bill through this House admitting it as a State under the Topeka constitution—a constitution formed by a band of traitors to the country—a constitution framed and passed in utter disregard and contempt of law, and which was but the creature of a minority not having received the sanction of a majority of the people of that Territory.

Mr. Chairman, in the discussion of this bill admitting Kansas under the Topeka constitution, we were completely deafened with the clamor of the republican members on this floor about the wrongs of Kansas, its outrageous laws, and the innumerable offences against right which were committed, as they allege, under the cognizance and connivance of the territorial government. And this clamor, sir, came from men who were endeavoring, at the same time, to obtain from Congress an endorsement of a purely revolutionary and treasonable movement, put on foot, and consummated, as I have already said, in defiance and contempt of all law. Their advocacy of this revolutionary movement, imbodyed in the admission of Kansas under the Topeka constitution, they pretended was based upon a desire to correct all these evils, which they alleged existed there under its present government. And yet, sir, how shallow the hypocrisy of such movements, and how easily is it exposed!

In the Senate a bill to correct these evils of which they so much complain, originally introduced by Senator Toombs, is passed, and sent to this House, repealing all those obnoxious laws, effecting a State organization—the object professed to be aimed at by the Topeka bill—providing a proper basis of representation in the convention to form a State constitution, pledging all parties to a fair and just commission to fix the representation in said convention, pledging the strong arm of the military branch of the government to stand by and sustain the integrity of the ballot-box in the election of delegates; in fact, doing every conceivable thing to disarm the advocates of the Topeka constitution of all opposition to it by its full provisions to correct every abuse of which they complain; and yet, sir, every republican in the Senate voted against it, and not one has moved to call it up in this House, notwithstanding they complain so much, and profess so ardent a desire to see the abuses that they allege exist in Kansas corrected, and quiet and peace restored to the Territory.

Sir, the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. DCCX] spoke the truth when he said it was not the object of the republican party to promote a settlement of affairs in Kansas; that none but extreme measures, such as they knew would not receive the sanction of the Senate, would meet their approval. In fact, that they wanted to let the question remain open that they might keep alive agitation, even though the result be a dismemberment of the Union, if necessary to enable them to obtain possession of the government, and convert it to their purposes. This, sir, is the party that has raised all this hue and cry, and yet have rejected the peace-offering presented by the Senate—a measure which redresses all alleged outrages upon Kansas, soothes all her afflictions, prevents further sinning against her, precludes the abridgment of the rights of the people—pledges, as I have said before, the strong arm of the military power of the government, and the fair selection of men from all parties and sections as census commissioners to see fair play in that Territory. This, sir, is the party publicly exhibiting their purpose not to settle the troubles in Kansas; and yet, planting themselves upon the

sole issue of making it free, present John C. Fremont and William L. Dayton to the American people for election to the two highest offices in their gift. In assuming this position before the country they insidiously disguise the further nefarious purposes of their organization. Covertly lurking beneath their carefully-devised platform lie other objects equally, if not more, dangerous to the welfare of the South. I have the authority of the distinguished gentleman from Massachusetts, on this floor, [Mr. BURLINGAME,] and the noted senator from the same State, [Mr. WILSON,] in the other end of the Capitol, to depict in stronger language than I can their other and darker purposes. I read their speeches delivered in Boston a little over a year ago. Mr. BURLINGAME said :

" If asked to state specially what he would do, he would answer : First, repeal the Nebraska bill; second, repeal the fugitive-slave law; third, abolish slavery in the District of Columbia; fourth, abolish the inter-State slave trade; next he would declare that slavery should not spread to one inch of the territory of the Union; he would then put the government actually and perpetually on the side of freedom—by which he meant that a bright-eyed boy in Massachusetts should have as good a chance for promotion in the navy as a boy of one of the first families in Virginia. He would have our foreign consuls take side with the noble Kossuth, and against that butcher Bedini. He would have judges who believe in a higher law, and an anti-slavery constitution, an anti-slavery Bible, and an anti-slavery God! Having thus denationalized slavery, he would not menace it in the States where it exists, but would say to the States, it is your local institution; bug it to your bosom until it destroys you. But he would say, you must let our freedom alone. [Applause.] If you but touch the hem of the garment of freedom, we will trample you to the earth. [Loud applause.] This is the only condition of repose, and it must come to this. He was encouraged by the recent election in the North, and he defended the 'new movement,' which he said was born of Puritan blood, and was against despotism of all kinds. This new party should be judged, like others, by its fruits. It had elected a champion of freedom to the United States Senate for four years, to fill the place of a man who was false to freedom, and not true to slavery. For himself, he could say that, so long as life dwelt in his bosom, so long would he fight for liberty and against slavery. In conclusion, he expressed the hope that soon the time might come when the sun should not rise on a master nor set on a slave."

After Mr. BURLINGAME had taken his seat there were loud and continued calls for "WILSON," in answer to which Hon. HENRY WILSON spoke as follows:

"Mr. Chairman and Ladies and Gentlemen: This is not the time nor the place for me to utter a word. You have listened to the eloquence of my young friend, and here to-night I endorse every sentiment he has uttered. In public or in private life, in majorities or in minorities, at home or abroad, I intend to live and to die with unrelenting hostility to slavery on my lips. I make no compromises anywhere, at home or abroad; I shall yield nothing of my anti-slavery sentiments to advance my own personal interests, to advance party interest, or to meet the demands of any State or section of our country. I hope to be able to maintain, on all occasions, these principles, to comprehend in my affections the whole country, and the people of the whole country—and when I say the whole country, I want everybody to understand that I include in that term Massachusetts and the North. This is not the time for me to detain you. You have called on me, most unexpectedly, to say a word, and, having done so, I will retire, thanking you for the honor of this occasion."

This, Mr. Chairman, is what the gentlemen from Massachusetts, Messrs. BURLINGAME and WILSON, who are now acting with the republicans, said was the mission of their party. Let the people of the South recollect that they thus spoke when they had gained a prominence under the auspices of the know-nothing organization, which was then flesh of the same flesh, and bone of the same bone, as the know-nothing organization in the South. These were their infamous sentiments at that time, in conceiving this republican organization, and they afford a key to the concealed movements and purposes of that party now looking to the entire subversion of the rights of the South, to make us their menials, and subject our property to the dangers of their caprices and pleasure. And, sir, should they succeed in electing John C. Fremont President—a man who has nothing in his past life to recommend him to the confidence of the country; possessing none of the elements of a statesman, and having no record, and, if any, on the side of the South—a man who has turned traitor to the land of his nativity, to those who nurtured him in his infancy and childhood, and honored him in his maturity;—I say, sir, if he should be elected, the alternative presents itself to the South of disgrace or disunion. The question will then stare us in the face, whether we will have our constitutional rights disregarded in the Union, or maintain them ourselves outside of it?

Sir, I am no alarmist; nor am I a disunionist. I represent a people here who love the Union—a people who have always been distinguished for their conservatism, who have always been represented in the councils of the nation by men noted for their Union-loving patriotism—a people that honored Clay, who combined in his person much of the genius of our institutions—a people who have ever thrown themselves into the breach to save the Union when the conflicts of contending factions threatened to destroy it; but, sir, if John C. Fremont should be elected, pledged as he is to war upon the institutions of the South, composed as his administration would be of men from but one section of the Union, filled as the federal offices would be by sectional men, all pledged to make common cause against the South, with a Congress backing up his administration, such as the present House, who conceive no measure too unconstitutional, too revolutionary, too disgraceful, to meet their sanction, so as it makes war upon the South, the frightful mien of disunion forces itself on them as far the preferable alternative between it and oppression and disgrace in the Union. They would then, still reminiscent

of its past glories, the memories of its giant statesmen, the heroic deeds of valor of its noted warriors, prefer rather to cut short its existence than to blacken those brilliant recollections with the record of its future disgrace.

Mr. Chairman, with this aspect of affairs presented to the South, and when the hopes of success in the republican party are based upon the prospects of its divisions, how can it be divided? May I not, sir, say, how dare a third organization present itself to that section for support, when these frightful issues are pending upon the result of the presidential election? Sir, I think I can speak for the South, and promise that she knows too well her position not to rebuke those who are seeking to divide her, to destroy the democratic party, and with it the Union.

And now, Mr. Chairman, let us examine into this third party, which I have said will be rebuked by the people of the South for attempting to divide its vote. It presents a ticket headed by Millard Fillmore, with Andrew Jackson Donelson for the vice presidency. It has no earthly prospect of success. Its purpose is to wage a guerilla warfare against the great democratic party, and, whilst it is protected by the panoply of the constitution, is fighting the battle of the country. Disguise it as they may, Mr. Chairman, their present conduct evidences a heartfelt wish rather to see the republicans successful, the constitution prostituted, the Union destroyed, than to see the country triumph in the success of democratic principles. When we look at its first opening hand in hand with abolitionism, an inference may be drawn, sir, showing that the connexion between the first loves is not entirely severed. Can it be possible, sir, that a sympathy still exists between them? When we look at their former union, and their present common warfare against the democratic party, the affirmative is not impossible. When we look at the fact that eighty-four republicans in this House were elected as know-nothings; that they go in for elevating the negro to the dignity and position of the white man; and, indeed, have not yet determined whether the white or the black race is superior; whilst, like their southern brethren, they go for degrading a portion of their white fellow-citizens to the level of the negro; —I say, sir, with these facts staring us in the face, the existence of sympathy between the black republicans and know-nothings of the South would not be surprising—a sympathy which would lead the one to indirectly aid the other by dividing the South, when, as a unit, it would render the triumph of democratic principles certain.

And now, Mr. Chairman, let us look at the history of this party from its inception, in connexion with the subject of slavery, down to the present time, and see if, from the facts which I present, it is at all strange that the so-called national know-nothings and black republicans are allies in the present contest against the democratic party. We find it meeting “at the hour of midnight, when all the world in slumber sleeps;” improving upon their first lesson in politics, which was to control municipal and county offices in the States, and naming in their secret conclaves men to represent congressional districts at the North. Then, sir, moving secretly and insidiously to the polls with their tickets fixed, they elected the eighty-four choice Americans that want to rule America who voted throughout the balloting for NATHANIEL P. BANKS for Speaker of this House. Nay, sir, NATHANIEL P. BANKS himself is a bantling of this super-American organization. He was elected by them, sent here and elected Speaker, a majority of those voting for him being know-nothings. They struck down at the North, with but few exceptions, every man in this House who voted for the Kansas bill. They defeated Shields, Dodge, and others, who were candidates for re-election to the Senate, and had voted for the Nebraska bill. Yes, sir, their conquering swords cleaved down all these patriots—these friends of the South, the constitution, and the Union—and put in their places WILSON, HALE, DURKEE, HARLAN, FESSENDEN, BURLINGAME, &c., and re-elected BANKS and others of the same stripe, all wily abolitionists, watching every opportunity to direct well-aimed blows at the interests of the South. These are the Americans they elected to rule America. Besides, sir, they ousted every governor of a State who was conservative in his sentiments, and placed in their stead impudent abolitionists, who dare to insult our sovereignty with State communications, which are nothing more than incendiary documents against slavery.

These, Mr. Chairman, were the results of the triumph of the know-nothing party at the North. Emboldened by the encouragement they received from their know-nothing friends in my section, it made a strike for the first gubernatorial chair elective after its initiation in the South. It was the executive chair of the Old Dominion that was to be filled—that dazzled with its high honors the guerilla eye of the dark-lantern party, and invited a trial of their midnight tactics to secure the prize. They attempted it, but were met by the just fortune of defeat. Thus, sir, did the most poisonous arrow, concocted at the North to destroy the South, lose its force before it reached its aim, and fall harmless at our feet. Virginia still stood firm, as she has ever done, to beat back the surges of fanaticism as they come from the North to attempt to sweep the South.

Failing, Mr. Chairman, in Virginia, they turned their eyes to other southern States where elections were soon to come off. A national council was held—the first regular gathering of the “knights with their visors down,” from all sections of the country, that was ever held. There was the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. RICARD] sitting cheek by jowl with the gentleman from Massachusetts, [Mr. BUFFINGTON.] and Mr. Bartlett of my State, presiding over a council of a political party in which he hailed as brother, and gave the pass word and grip to, HENRY WILSON, senator from Massachusetts, of rifle-cane notoriety—all sworn votaries to the same false idol. It was necessary to do something for the South, to carry the southern States

in which elections were then yet to be held. For two days was the South libelled in that convention, and yet the delegates from that section still implored something on paper to show their people; and the result of their prayers was the adoption of the famous twelfth section by a vote pretending to represent a majority of the American party of the nation, when, in fact, it was an emanation from a minority of the electoral vote represented in that convention. Upon this twelfth-section subterfuge, Mr. Chairman, they went into the fight in the South. It was there represented as the national platform of the American party. At the North it was repudiated, and there anti-slavery was the sole issue that the American party made the fight on. And yet, sir, every triumph at the North was hailed at the South as a great American victory. Their connexion was still kept up. By thus dealing with the people in a double sense, they carried my State, elected the governor by an overwhelming majority of the legislature, six members of Congress, and a few members of Congress in other southern States.

Sir, I told the people of my district, upon every stamp, that the know-nothings were deceiving them; that the party was not national party; and that, as it existed in the South in reference to the subject of slavery, it had no existence elsewhere, and that on that vital subject the party North and South had no feeling in common. Warmly did the know-nothing orators repudiate this, what they conceived to be an imputation on their party. How truthfully have my representations of it been verified! They met here together in December; they could not agree in the election of a Speaker. Eighty-four of them voted for BANKS, the philosopher on the subject of the races; and a few straggling northerners, with the South Americans, voting for FULLER, so-called national American, but whose past political history is as strong against the South as that of any anti-slavery politician of his day. It is enough for me to say, Mr. Chairman, of Mr. FULLER, the Kentucky and other southern know-nothings' candidate for Speaker, that during that contest he voted almost continuously for ALEXANDER C. M. PLANNINGTON, who, as a member of the last Congress, voted to bring in a bill to repeal the fugitive-slave law. I will not detain the House by going into his antecedents. That vote, sir, is enough for me; it is enough to condemn every southern man who voted for him.

Mr. Chairman, let it be recollect that, on the final vote which was to decide whether NATHANIEL P. BANKS was to be the Speaker, two southern know-nothings threw away their votes on Mr. FULLER, and indirectly aided in Mr. BANKS's election; that all of the northern so-called national know-nothings who were present thus threw away their votes; that Mr. FULLER himself, also, though in the House, did not vote; and several of the southern Americans did not vote for Governor AIKEN until it was known that their votes would not elect him, and then they gave their votes, and appeared on the record in favor of him. I merely submit these facts to the consideration of the people, to let them draw their own conclusions as to whether many of the know-nothings, North and South, did not alike rather see BANKS elected to the speakership than a national man like Governor AIKEN.

And now, Mr. Chairman, let us see from the record what the history of the candidate of the American party, Mr. Fillmore, is in relation to the subject of slavery.

First, I will read his Erie letter, committing him fully to the most odious doctrines of the anti-slavery party of the North:

BUFFALO, October 17, 1838.

Sir: Your communication of the 13th instant as chairman of the committee appointed by the "Anti-Slavery Society of the County of Erie," has just come to hand. You solicit my answer to the following interrogatories:

I. Do you believe that petitions to Congress on the subject of slavery and the slave trade ought to be received, read, and respectfully considered by the representatives of the people?

II. Are you opposed to the annexation of Texas to this Union, under any circumstances, so long as slaves are held therein?

III. Are you in favor of Congress exercising all the constitutional powers it possesses to abolish the internal slave trade between the States?

IV. Are you in favor of immediate legislation for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia?

Answer. I am much engaged, and have no time to enter into an argument or explain at length my reasons for my opinions. I shall, therefore, content myself, for the present, by answering all your interrogatories in the affirmative, and leave for some future occasion a more extended discussion on the subject.

MILLARD FILLMORE.

Let us recollect that this letter was written to a member of the Erie County Abolition Society, and that it evidences the most ultra species of pandering to the vilest anti-slavery sentiments. Not a measure could be conceived in the worst abolition mind in antagonism to the South but what meets his approval in this letter. He wishes in it the most incendiary abolition petitions to be read, and engage the attention and time of the House. Slavery must be abolished in Texas before he would vote for her admission, the internal slave trade between the States must be abolished, as must also slavery in the District of Columbia. But, sir, this letter is not a series of promises unkept. Every vote he gave in Congress came up to its mark, and was cast to weaken the South and to strengthen the abolition sentiment of the country. Here, sir, is his congressional record:

On the 11th of December, 1838, Mr. Atherton asked leave to offer his celebrated resolutions,

which Mr. Bynum, a leading democrat in the House from the State of North Carolina said "were sufficiently strong to secure every southern interest, while they particularly forbore to encroach upon the rights of any other portion of the Union." These resolutions declared that Congress had no power over slavery in the States; that abolition petitions were gotten up for the purpose of destroying the institution of slavery in the States; that the agitation of the subject of slavery in the District of Columbia and the Territories was against the true spirit of the constitution; that the constitution rested upon the broad principle of equality amongst the members of the confederacy; that Congress had no right to discriminate between the institutions of one portion of the States and another, with a view of abolishing the one and promoting the other; and that all attempts to do any of these things was a violation of the constitution, destructive of the fundamental principle upon which the Union of these States rests, and beyond the jurisdiction of Congress; and that all abolition petitions be laid upon the table without being debated, printed, or referred. Upon these resolutions several votes were taken in divers shapes, and upon eight votes *Mr. Fillmore* is found voting adverse to the South, against the resolutions, and alongside of *Joshua R. Giddings*, John Quincy Adams, Thomas Corwin, William Slade, and other black abolitionists of like character.

On the 13th of December of the same year Mr. Wise, of Virginia, offered a series of resolutions declaring against the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, the abolition of the inter-State slave trade, and the reception of abolition petitions, affirming that the laws of Congress alone govern in the prescription of the mode of recovery of fugitive slaves; that Congress has no power to impose the abolition of slavery upon a State as a condition of its admission into the Union; that the citizens of a slave State have the right to take their slaves through a free State; that the general government is constitutionally bound to protect them in such right; that the laws of the non-slaveholding States in conflict with such right were null and void. The motion to suspend the rules for the introduction of these resolutions was lost; *Mr. Fillmore* voting adverse to the motion to suspend the rules, and against the South, along with *Adams, Giddings, & Co.*

On the same day Mr. Slade, *abolitionist*, from Vermont, moved resolutions against the slave trade between the District of Columbia and the States; against the same trade between the States, and in favor of receiving, debating, printing, and referring abolition petitions. On the motion to suspend the rules for the purpose of introducing these resolutions, which was lost, *Mr. Fillmore* again voted against the South in favor of suspending the rules, along with *Adams, Giddings, Slade, & Co.*

On the 31st of December, 1839, Mr. Coles moved to suspend the rules for the purpose of moving a resolution against the reception of abolition petitions; which motion was lost; *Mr. Fillmore* again voting against the South—against suspending the rules—along with *Adams, Giddings, Slade, & Co.*

On the 13th of January, 1840, Mr. Lincoln, of Massachusetts, presented an abolition petition, which Mr. Johnson, of Tennessee, moved to lay on the table; which motion was carried; *Mr. Fillmore* again voting with the *abolitionists*, against the South, and in the negative.

On the next day Mr. Thompson, of South Carolina, moved a suspension of the rules to introduce a resolution against the reception and debating of abolition petitions; which was lost; *Mr. Fillmore* again voting against the South, in the negative, and with the *abolitionists*.

On the 28th of the same month the noted 21st rule was adopted, which precluded the reception or entertainment in any way of an abolition petition. On adopting this rule, *Mr. Fillmore* again voted against the South, in the negative, and with the *abolitionists*.

On the 9th of December, 1840, Mr. Adams, of Massachusetts, moved a repeal of this last rule. Mr. Jenifer, of Maryland, moved to lay the motion on the table; which was carried; *Mr. Fillmore* voting in the negative, against the South, and with the *abolitionists*.

On 21st of January, 1841, Mr. Adams presented an abolition petition. Mr. Connor moved to lay a part of it, not embraced within the effect of the 21st rule, on the table. One vote was taken in connexion with this subject, on which *Mr. Fillmore* again voted against the South, and with the *abolitionists*.

On the 7th of January, 1842, Mr. Giddings presented an abolition petition, to the reception of which Messrs. Johnson, of Maryland, and Wise, of Virginia, objected under the 21st rule. Mr. Campbell, of South Carolina, moved to lay its reception on the table; which was carried; *Mr. Fillmore* again voting against the South, in the negative, and with the *abolitionists*.

On the 21st of the same month Mr. Adams presented an abolition petition, praying the naturalization of free-negro foreigners, and that they be allowed to hold real estate. Mr. Wise moved to lay its reception on the table; which motion was carried. *Mr. Fillmore* again voted against the South, in the negative, and with the *abolitionists*.

On the 12th of December, 1842, Mr. Adams called up his motion to rescind the 21st rule. Mr. Johnson, of Maryland, moved to lay it on the table; which motion was carried; *Mr. Fillmore* again voting against the South, in the negative, and with the *abolitionists*.

On the 31st of January, 1843, Mr. Morgan moved a resolution instructing the Committee on Territories to bring in a bill repealing a certain act of the territorial legislature of Florida, preventing the immigration of free negroes into that Territory. Mr. Black moved to lay the resolution on the table; which was carried; *Mr. Fillmore* again voting against the South, in the negative, and with the *abolitionists*.

On the 23d of February Mr. Briggs, of Massachusetts, asked for a suspension of the rules to

introduce a resolution instructing the Committee on the Judiciary to bring in a bill repealing the same act of the legislature of Florida. The motion to suspend the rules was lost; Mr. Fillmore again voting against the South, in the affirmative, and with the abolitionists.

Mr. Chairman, I submit to this House and to the country if this record, which is taken from the Congressional Globe of the dates I have mentioned, and which may also be seen in the Journal of the House of those dates, does not prove Mr. Fillmore an abolitionist at heart of the deepest dye—if it does not fix him indelibly upon the record as having voted to sustain the reception, discussion, printing, and action on by Congress, of petitions to effect the following purposes?

The abolition of slavery and the slave-trade in the District of Columbia.

The abolition of the inter-State slave trade.

The non-admission of slave States.

The making of slaves free who are *in transitu* from one slave State to another on sea.

The making of foreign negroes naturalized citizens.

The right of foreign negroes to hold real estate.

And, Mr. Chairman, in addition to these propositions, I hold that, by his vote on the various resolutions which I have mentioned, he committed himself to the following doctrines:

That abolition petitions are not a part of a plan of operations to affect and destroy the institution of slavery within the States.

That Congress has the right to do that indirectly which it cannot do directly.

That the agitation of the subject of slavery in the District of Columbia and the Territories, to overthrow that institution in the several States, is not a violation of the true spirit of the constitution, is not an infringement of the right of the States affected, and is not a breach of the faith upon which they entered the confederacy.

That Congress has the right to discriminate between the institutions of one portion of the States and another, with a view of abolishing the one and promoting the other.

That the abolition of slavery, the inter-State slave trade and the discrimination between the institutions of the several States, would not be violative of the constitution, destructive of the fundamental principles upon which the Union rests, and that the consummation of such measures is within the power of Congress.

That Congress can consider petitions on subjects over which it has no power.

That such petitions should be received, debated, printed, referred, and considered.

That a citizen of a slave State cannot pass *in transitu* with his slave property through free territory, and that the laws preventing him from so doing are constitutional and of binding effect.

That a Territory ought to be forced by Congress to permit the imposition upon it of the immigration of free negroes into its limits.

That Congress has power to impose upon a State the abolition of slavery within its limits as a condition of its admission into the Union.

But, Mr. Chairman, his congressional record does not complete the chapter of his opposition to the South.

He opposed, sir, in 1844, the annexation of Texas.

In 1847 he led the whig ticket in New York as the candidate of that party for comptroller, and was elected on a platform containing the following as a part of one of its resolutions:

" * * * they declare, since the crisis has arrived when the question must be met, their uncompromising hostility to the extension of slavery into any territory now free, or which may hereafter be acquired by any action of the government of our Union."

And now, Mr. Chairman, I anticipate the answer to all this startling array of facts. I will be told, as will this House and the country, that Mr. Fillmore signed the fugitive-slave bill, and that that one fact is a sufficient retribution for his previous offences. Sir, there is no merit attached to his signature of that bill, when we reflect upon the circumstances which surrounded that act. Mr. Fillmore signed the other measures of compromise accompanying this act, and delayed signing the fugitive-slave law. He said himself, in his speech at Louisville, Kentucky, in 1854:

"The fugitive-slave law had some provisions in it to which I had some objections. *I regretted the necessity of its being passed at all.*" * * * "I examined it in the midst of hurry, confusion, and difficulties, and a doubt came up in my mind whether it w^ts not unconstitutional, as denying the right of *habeas corpus* to the fugitive slave, which doubt I submitted to the Attorney General, (Mr. Crittenden,) and upon being assured by him that the law was not a violation of the constitution, therefore I gave my sanction to the bill."

Thus it will be seen, Mr. Chairman, that he hesitated to sign the bill, because he thought, like his old compeers in Congress, *Giddings, Slade, & Co.*, that the runaway negro ought to have a trial by jury.

Why, Mr. Chairman, the man who runs second on the ticket to Mr. Fillmore, the "patriotic greasy Tennessean," Andrew Jackson Donelson, thus knocked Mr. Fillmore's pretensions to credit for signing that bill into the head.

In the Union, in 1851, when he was editor, he said :

"As to the assertion that the administration [of Fillmore] is entitled to the credit of standing up to the measures of the Compromise in good faith, *it is too ridiculous to require a denial, and too preposterous to demand refutation.* Every free white citizen, who is not an infant, idiot, or lunatic, or woefully forgetful, knows that it is *utterly and entirely* without foundation. All the measures of the Compromise, except the fugitive-slave law, were self-enacting. As to that law, Mr. Fillmore was *unwilling to permit it to become a law* before he consulted Mr. Crittenden on the subject—a fact which the Republic [his organ] mentioned at the time, in order to justify Mr. Fillmore before his northern higher-law friends for not returning the bill with his objections."

We know, Mr. Chairman, that Mr. Fillmore came into office pledged to the whig doctrine not to veto a bill when it was constitutional, and was passed by a majority of the representatives of the States and people. The constitutionality of the fugitive-slave law is evident to the dullest intellect. Mr. Fillmore, though, was in doubt; his Attorney General removed these doubts. After that doubt being removed, the following affords the key to his signature of it:

The New Albany Tribune, the leading Fillmore organ in Indiana, says:

"Mr. Fillmore gave his official sanction to the fugitive-slave bill because we (the free-soilers) could not have got other laws on which our hearts were set that we have got, had not *that law* been passed also, and because in doing so he was but carrying out one of the great principles of the party which elected him—that the personal opinions of the Executive on mere questions of policy ought never to be brought into conflict with the will of the people's representatives *by an arbitrary exercise of the veto power.*"

Judge Conklin, his minister to Mexico, in a late speech, said:

"But in imputing to him a willingness to extend and fortify slavery, *I am persuaded his assailants have done him injustice.* I believe, on the contrary, that he *still holds* slavery in the abstract, as he is known formerly to have done, in as *great abhorrence* as they do. The evidence constantly cited to justify this charge is the fact of his having affixed his signature to the fugitive-slave bill. The alternative was to interpose his veto. But no one had a right to expect him to do this, for he had no right himself to do it. Either from *doubt* about its constitutionality, or from deference to the opinion of those who questioned it, he *did appoint* the usual precaution of submitting the bill to the examination of the Attorney General, and asking *his opinion* of its constitutionality. To have vetoed it under the very extraordinary circumstances of the case would have been, to say the least, a palpable violation of the constitution. No enlightened man who understands the subject can doubt this, and no such man can have been sincere in casting censure upon Mr. Fillmore for adopting the opposite alternative."

But, sir, even admitting that he signed the fugitive-slave law in good faith, the first official act of clemency on his part, subsequent to signing it, was to pardon two men who were guilty of violating the very principle of the bill. In the year 1848 a deep-laid conspiracy was planned, and nearly consummated, to carry off from Virginia and the District of Columbia a large number of slaves. Two men, Drayton and Sears, the captain and charterer of a schooner called the Pearl, were the parties. They had got off from Washington seventy-seven slaves on the schooner, and had actually reached the mouth of the river with them, when they were overtaken by a steamboat and brought back. The citizens were so much excited that they came near using lynch-law. Drayton and Sears were tried and convicted on seventy-three cases for transporting slaves, were fined heavily, and committed to jail in default of payment. Mr. Fillmore pardoned them on the application of Senator Sumner, and thus outraged law went unavenged by the pardoning of these negro-thieves. The security of slave property was impaired; a large amount of fines was lost to the government, and to the owners of the slaves, who, under the law, were to have half of the fines.

And now, Mr. Chairman, having disposed of the idea by his own testimony; that of the man who runs second on the ticket with him; that of his minister to Mexico; that of the leading organ of Mr. Fillmore in Indiana; and by his pardon of Drayton and Sears, that there was any merit to be attached to Mr. Fillmore's signature to the fugitive-slave law, let us look at the construction of so much of his cabinet as were from the North.

Nathan K. Hall, of New York, Postmaster General, a Wilmot-proviso man.

Thomas Corwin, of Ohio, Secretary of the Treasury, a noted abolitionist.

Solomon D. Hubbard, of Connecticut, (successor of Hall,) a Wilmot-proviso man.

Daniel Webster, Secretary of State, a Wilmot-proviso man.

And now, Mr. Chairman, for the benefit of those men who rail against this administration for having, by mistake, appointed some men to office who turned out afterwards to be free-soilers, let me refer to the letter of the Hon. Samuel A. Smith, which speaks in stronger language than I can, showing that Mr. Fillmore appointed none but free-soilers to office at the North:

WASHINGTON, June 7, 1854.

DEAR SIR: I received your letter some time since, and was at the time investigating the subject to which you refer. In Tennessee, as well as North Carolina, one of the principal charges against the present democratic administration is "the appointment of free-soilers to office," and this charge is made by the present supporters of Fillmore for President of the United States. This charge against President Pierce, though unfounded, yet coming from the source it does, has led me to examine carefully the political, or rather sectional, views of the appointees of Mr. Fillmore during his presidential term.

This has been a work of no little labor, and has required some time, which accounts for the delay in answering your letter.

Upon this investigation I find the following facts:

First. Every man appointed to any important office by Mr. Fillmore while President, whose residence was north of Mason and Dixon's line, including three members of his cabinet, was a free-soiler, and in favor of the Wilmot proviso.

Second. One of the leading members of his cabinet, the Hon. Thomas Corwin, of Ohio, Secretary of the Treasury, was a prominent abolitionist.

Third. Every one of the appointees before referred to, who had taken any public position on the slavery question, was known, at the time of his appointment, to be in favor of the prohibition of slavery in the Territories.

Fourth. Most of those from the same section retained in office by Mr. Fillmore, who had previously been appointed by President Taylor, were free-soilers or Wilmot-provisoists.

Fifth. President Pierce has appointed no man to office since he was inaugurated who, in the canvass of 1852, and at the time of his appointment, was not believed by him to stand on the national democratic platform of 1852, which expressly denies to Congress the power to legislate on the subject of slavery in the States or Territories.

Sixth. The difference, therefore, in this respect, between the two Presidents, is this: that while General Pierce may have appointed some free-soilers to office without a knowledge of the fact that they were such at the time, Mr. Fillmore's appointees in the northern States were all free-soilers, and known to be such at the time of their appointment.

I have made this examination and comparison with no view to injure Mr. Fillmore, because I think the subject of appointments to office and the distribution of executive patronage small matters when compared with the great principles now at issue between the various parties of this country. I shall do Mr. Fillmore full justice in the coming canvass for his conduct while President, and shall not deny to him the credit of executing faithfully the laws of the country. I have taken the time to make this investigation to show the ignorance, the inconsistency, or the insincerity of his supporters in the southern States, whose principal objection to the present administration is the unfounded charge of "the appointment of free-soilers to office."

Excuse the brevity of this letter.

Yours truly,

S. A. SMITH.

Hon. H. M. SHAW.

Looking, Mr. Chairman, at the antecedents of Mr. Fillmore, the character of his administration, and his appointments to office, it would seem that the last national council of the American party repealed the platform adopted but one year since, to suit the man whom it predetermined should be their nominee for President. The party in the South fought the last battle on the twelfth section. Whatever advantage they gained in that contest was by the imposition they practised upon the people of the South, as I have already shown in my remarks on that subject. The convention which passed the twelfth section met in June, 1855; that which repealed it, in February, 1856. Just think of a party changing its platform of principles in eight months! Well, sir, the abolitionists in the national council, in February, told their brethren of the South that they (the South) had not succeeded on the twelfth section; that they had tried it and failed, and that they (of the North) could not succeed unless the twelfth section was stricken out. They insisted on its repeal. Their southern brethren kicked a little, but it was repealed. The know-nothings from the South said that the council had no right to dictate a platform of principles, notwithstanding the constitution of the party lodged that power in the council. That is a matter of no consequence, sir; for the nominating convention, which met a few days afterwards, and was composed of nearly all the men who composed the national council, endorsed its action on the platform, and not only did that, sir, but admitted the delegates headed by the gentleman from Pennsylvania, [Mr. EDW.] who voted here through thick and thin for Mr. BANKS for Speaker—delegates who represented that part of the American party of Pennsylvania who had repudiated the twelfth section whilst it was a part of the creed. The southern delegates protested; but finally we see them coming in and bending to the dictation of the anti-slavery delegates, swallowing the repeal of the twelfth section, subscribing to the new doctrine, and helping in the nomination of Fillmore and Donelson.

Mr. Chairman, the repeal of the Missouri Compromise was voted for by the entire South in Congress, with one or two exceptions. The Kentucky delegation in both houses voted for it; it was sustained in every election at the South, not a single county could have been carried by the know-nothings of my State had they denounced the repeal of the Missouri Compromise; and yet, sir, after their election, turning their backs upon their pledges endorsing that repeal, they met in Philadelphia and adopted a platform, the thirteenth section of which declares "opposition to the reckless and unwise policy of the administration," * * * "as shown in reopening sectional agitation by the repeal of the Missouri Compromise." Yes, sir, these men who owe their present position here to their unqualified approbation of the repeal of the Missouri Compromise meet in national council and join in denouncing it. On this section, and the repeal of the twelfth section of the platform of 1855, Mr. Fillmore was nominated; and the southern men who support him "have registered an edict against themselves." But, sir, let us look into this seventh section, adopted in lieu of the twelfth section, and see its rottenness. The seventh section says:

"The recognition of the right of the native-born and naturalized citizens of the United States;

permanently residing in any Territory thereof, to frame their constitution and laws, and to regulate their domestic and social affairs in their own mode, subject only to the provisions of the federal constitution, with the right of admission into the Union whenever they have the requisite population for one representative in Congress: *Provided, always,* That none but those who are citizens of the United States under the constitution and laws thereof, and who have a fixed residence in any such Territory, ought to participate in the formation of a constitution, or in the enactment of laws, for said Territory or State."

Can you find anything in that about slavery? Not once does the important word appear. Not an iota about the Kansas-Nebraska bill. But once in the whole platform does the Kansas act occur to their minds, and that is in the thirteenth section, which I have commented upon, denouncing the repeal of the Missouri Compromise.

Then, sir, in the opinion of this American party, the repeal of the Missouri Compromise was wrong. If it was wrong to repeal it, it is right to restore it. The South endorsed the repeal. Mr. Fillmore was opposed to it—the platform of the party upon which he stands denounces it. The South, then, and Mr. Fillmore, are antipodes. How, sir, can the South support him? I tell you, Mr. Chairman, that the present is not the time when the South will sanction any double-dealing on this subject. She must have a man square on the Kansas question. She despises the man who would believe the repeal of the Missouri Compromise wrong and not strike for its restoration. She believes that the principles of the Kansas and Nebraska bill will not be fairly tested under an administration headed by a man that was opposed to its enactment. To speak out plain, sir, I believe, and am of opinion, that the southern people believe that Millard Fillmore would not do justice to the South in this important connexion. Can any man on this floor from the South, who is supporting him for the presidency, give me the exact position of Mr. Fillmore on this subject? Will some southern Know-nothing tell me what Mr. Fillmore would do with a bill restoring the Missouri Compromise? I pause for a reply. There is no answer. By your failure, know-nothings from the South, to answer this question, you have placed yourselves in the position of recommending a man for the presidency to your people, of whose opinions on this vital subject you know nothing. You are culpable of the charge of going it blind in an alarming crisis. He would sign a bill restoring the Missouri Compromise. He would make Kansas free. He would be true to his anti-slavery record, in which, as I have shown, he endorsed the Missouri Compromise, by voting against a resolution that Congress had no power to impose the abolition of slavery within the limits of a State, as a condition of her admission into the Union. He speaks here in this House through the mouth of the gentleman from New York, [Mr. HAVEN.] and the gentleman from Indiana, [Mr. DUNN.] the former his old law-partner, and his bosom friend, personal and political. The southern know-nothings indulged themselves with him as an orator at their meeting in this city the other night. And yet, sir, that is nothing strange when we recollect that my colleague [Mr. H. MARSHALL] read Mr. LEWIS D. CAMPBELL out of the American party for not standing on the twelfth section, in the early part of the session; and after that section is repealed we find him speaking from the same stump at Georgetown, in this District, with that notorious black republican whom he had theretofore excommunicated from the American organization.

The gentleman from Indiana heads the Fillmore electoral ticket in the State of Indiana. Both of them were elected as anti-Nebraska men to this House. Neither of them would vote for a Nebraska man for Speaker; indeed, they were so sectional that they would not vote for a southern man, notwithstanding their brother know-nothing, my colleague from the Louisville district, [Mr. H. MARSHALL,] was a candidate. One of them voted for Mr. BANKS at one time during the balloting.

These men represent Mr. Fillmore truly here. Well, sir, what have they done? The gentleman from Indiana has initiated a revolutionary proceeding in this House to stop the wheels of government until the Missouri Compromise is restored. He objected the other day to the passage of the civil and diplomatic bill until that thing was done. Not a dollar will be voted out of the treasury until the Missouri Compromise is restored. The fiscal year has expired: the government is embarrassed for the want of appropriations to go on; the Fillmore elector of the State of Indiana says it shall not have a cent, as long as he can defeat it by parliamentary tactics, until the South is excluded from Kansas. In the same speech in which he announced that revolutionary purpose, he said it was for the purpose of restoring peace to the country that he wanted the Missouri Compromise reinstated; and he believed the election of Fillmore would be more conducive to the restoration of peace than that of Fremont.

Mr. HAVEN, Mr. Fillmore's law-partner, announced, in reply to a question from the gentleman from Missouri, [Mr. KENNEDY] that he would vote for a proposition fixing a qualification to a resolution to adjourn similar to that offered by the gentleman from Indiana to the resolution of the Senate, which provided that before the day of adjournment the Missouri Compromise should, in terms or substance, be restored.

And, Mr. Chairman, let me refer to another fact. The larger portion of the northern, so called, national know-nothings voted for Mr. DUNN's bill, restoring the Missouri Compromise—amongst them Mr. Fillmore's particular friend, the gentleman from New York, [Mr. HAVEN.] If the northern *national* know-nothings, who voted for it, had voted against it, it would have been lost. Thus we find that a proposition to restore the Missouri Compromise,

introduced by a Fillmore elector, was carried by the northern friends of Mr. Fillmore. What think the know-nothings of the South of their northern brethren now?

And let me here, Mr. Chairman, introduce an extract from the speech of the gentleman from New York, [Mr. CLARKE] a supporter of Mr. Fillmore, and a gentleman who is looked upon here as the quintessence of national know-nothingism in the North. This extract speaks stronger in its own interpretation than I can. It explains itself, and disarms the know-nothings of the South of one of their strongest arguments against the worthy foreign and native Catholics of the country:

"As a Protestant I can do no less, then, than oppose the aggressions of the slave power; and when I find Jesuitism allaying itself with that power, and striving to secure the success of its platform and its candidate, I cannot fail to remark that consistency demands from all who love the Protestant principle, opposition to the usurpations of slavery, no less than relentless hostility to the aggressions of Popery. They are twin demons; and, God helping me, I am resolved, within the limits of constitutional action, to give no quarter to either."

Does the South want any better evidence than this of the real opinions of Mr. Fillmore on this vital question? His southern supporters admit that they know nothing about it. The gentleman from New York, [Mr. HAVEN,] every one will admit, knows everything about the views of Mr. Fillmore. The gentleman from Indiana would not be an elector for him unless he knew what would be his policy as to the restoration of the Missouri Compromise. These gentlemen, I say, who go for a revolutionary movement to exclude the South from Kansas would not support a man of doubtful position on this question. Let the people of the South ponder well on the lesson which is read to them in the support of Mr. Fillmore by these congressional revolutionists against the rights of the South in Kansas.

Mr. Chairman, I briefly call the attention of the House to another clause in the platform of the late know-nothing council, and I am done. It denounces the granting to unnaturalized foreigners of the right of suffrage in Kansas and Nebraska. They stultify their own candidates, Mr. Chairman, by such a declaration as that; for on the 2d of March, 1853, Mr. Fillmore approved a bill constituting the Territory of Washington, which gave aliens over twenty-one years of age the right to vote, and to hold office in said Territory.

Mr. Chairman, so far as the distinguished candidate of the democratic party is concerned, there is no need for saying but little about him. During a long course of legislative life, he has been foremost amongst those true patriots from the North who have ever opposed the inroads of abolitionism upon the constitution, and has stood up in maintenance of the constitutional rights of the South. On the 7th of January, 1836, Mr. Buchanan presented a memorial from the Society of Friends in Pennsylvania, praying the abolition of slavery and the slave trade in the District of Columbia, and in alluding to the petition said:

"What would be the effects of granting their request? You would thus erect a citadel in the very heart of these States upon a territory which they have ceded to you for a far different purpose, from which abolitionists and incendiaries could securely attack the peace and safety of their citizens; you establish a spot within the slaveholding States, which would be a city of refuge for runaway slaves; you create by law a central point from which trains of gunpowder may be securely laid extending into the surrounding States, which may at any moment produce a destructive and fearful explosion. By passing such a law you introduce the enemy into the very bosom of these two States, and afford them every opportunity of producing a servile insurrection. Is there any reasonable man, who can for one moment suppose that Virginia and Maryland would have ceded the District of Columbia to the United States, if they had entertained the slightest idea that Congress would have used it for any such purpose? They ceded it for your use, for your convenience, and not for their own destruction. When slavery ceases to exist under the laws of Virginia and Maryland, then, and not till then, ought it to be abolished in the District of Columbia."

On the 11th of January, 1836, Mr. Buchanan again urged the same objection to a similar memorial; and asked for a reference by which all such petitions could be disposed of without debate, "so as to put the exciting question at rest."

On the 4th of April, 1836, Mr. Buchanan urged the passage of the bill admitting Arkansas into the Union as a State, with a constitution establishing slavery.

On the 25th of April, 1836, Mr. Buchanan presented an abolition petition against the admission of Arkansas into the Union with its pro-slavery constitution, (stating that he himself had charge of the bill admitting Arkansas,) and moved to lay the petition on the table.

On the 2d of March, 1836, Mr. Buchanan made a powerful speech in favor of laying abolition petitions on the table without debate.

On the 6th of February, 1836, he moved to lay seven abolition petitions on the table without debate.

In 1836 Mr. Buchanan supported a bill to prohibit the circulation of abolition papers through the mails.

In the same year he proposed and voted for the admission of Arkansas.

In January, 1838, Mr. Buchanan advocated and voted for every one of Calhoun's celebrated resolutions on the slavery question, defining the rights of the States and the limits of federal authority, and affirming it to be the duty of the government to protect and uphold the institutions of the South.

On the 18th of December, 1837, Mr. Buchanan further vindicated the policy of laying abolition petitions on the table without discussion.

On the 13th of February, 1840, Mr. Buchanan made a masterly speech in defence of his national position on the slavery question.

On the 23d of May, 1836, Mr. Buchanan made an able and eloquent defence of Texas in her struggle with Mexico.

On the 8th of June, 1844, Mr. Buchanan made a great speech in favor of the annexation of Texas.

Mr. Buchanan, on Tuesday, the 4th of February, 1845, announced that he was in a minority of one on the committee on the Texas-annexation resolutions, but that he should advocate their adoption notwithstanding.

And again, on the 4th of February, he announced that, although in a minority of one in the Committee on Foreign Relations, he was anxious that the Texas question should be discussed and decided as soon as possible.

On the 13th of February Mr. Buchanan made a most powerful argument, showing the constitutionality and expediency of admitting Texas by joint resolution into the Union of the States.

In 1847 he sustained the Clayton compromise.

In 1848 Mr. Buchanan united with the South in proposing to the abolitionists to extend the Missouri Compromise line to the Pacific.

Mr. Buchanan, in November, 1850, wrote a letter to the people of Philadelphia, declaring that the compromise measures of that year had superseded the Missouri line.

In 1851 he remonstrated against an enactment of the Pennsylvania legislature for obstructing the arrest and return of fugitive slaves.

He negotiated for the purchase of Cuba while in the cabinet of Mr. Polk.

In May, 1856, Mr. Buchanan endorsed the resolutions of the Pennsylvania democratic State convention, endorsing the principles of the Kansas bill.

In June, 1856, he was nominated on a platform adopted by the Cincinnati Convention, answering all the demands of the South with reference to the Kansas bill and the general question of slavery. In his letter of June 16, 1856, accepting the nomination, he places himself fairly and squarely on the platform adopted at Cincinnati.

Thus, Mr. Chairman, have I presented the record of the only presidential candidates who are claiming the suffrages of the South. Can there be a comparison between them, unless one odious to that of Mr. Fillmore? He is shown never to have given a vote connected with the subject of slavery unless one antagonistic to the interests of the South. On the other hand, Mr. Buchanan is shown never to have given a vote, either directly or indirectly, during his whole congressional career, but what was friendly to the South, and in character with the votes of her most trustworthy statesman. *Fillmore* voted all the time with *Giddings, Slade, & Co.*, abolitionists; *Buchanan* side by side with *Calhoun*. The record of the one is emphatically abolition; that of the other national. I submit these words to the people of the South, and ask them can they countenance the candidacy of a man so unsound as Mr. Fillmore, when that candidacy but divides the South, and promotes the chances of Fremont?

Mr. Chairman, the republicans of the North have no hope of carrying the election of President, unless, by the aid of their know-nothing friends in dividing the South, they can throw the election into the House. And, sir, from what I can learn, the southern know-nothings are not altogether unwilling to have the election removed from the people and introduced into this arena. Their conduct, sir, in running Mr. Fillmore, evidences this feeling. Is that the way they want Americans to rule America?—to defeat the election by the people and confide it to this House, where abolitionism reigns supreme—where there is a gentleman who, in that event, would cast an equal vote with New York, and who, representing a slaveholding State, felt himself instructed to vote for expelling Mr. BROOKS; and where a proposition is pending to eject the gentleman from Iowa, [Mr. HALL,] that his colleague, [Mr. THORINGTON,] who voted for Mr. BANKS, and who was a member of the last national council of the know-nothings, might cast the vote of that State? And is the ejection of Mr. HALL impossible, after that of Allen, of Illinois, who was fairly entitled to his seat? And suppose, in addition thereto, the vacancies in this House from Illinois should be filled, so as to give that State to the republicans: where, sir, is there a chance of beating Fremont here? Leaving out the possibilities in the Illinois case, in the other contingency I have mentioned, is there not a prospect of electing Fremont in the House? What, sir! the southern people aiding in throwing the election into the House that elected Mr. BANKS Speaker? I cannot believe it. I would rather believe that they will unite to rebuke the attempt to produce this result than to aid in its consummation.

Mr. Chairman, I deem it appropriate upon this occasion to refer to a charge, made in my State, connecting Mr. Buchanan with the old charge of bargain and intrigue brought against Mr. Clay during his life, arising from his acceptance of the position of Secretary of State under the administration of Mr. Adams. I might well ask here, sir, what right have the champions of the know-nothing party to take upon themselves the defence of Mr. Clay at this juncture? I have no doubt that, if living to-day, he would be like his son, James B. Clay, co-operating with the democratic party; for in the last speech that he ever made to the people who had so long honored him, he stated in substance that whenever the whig party was found

degenerating into a mere faction, he should co-operate with that party which was national and conservative in its character. But, sir, I do not propose to discuss this charge at length: I will only refer gentlemen who feel disposed to make it to Mr. Clay himself, who, in his letter of the 14th of August, 1827, to Francis Brook, in speaking of this charge, and Mr. Buchanan's letter in connexion therewith, used this language: "Indeed, I could not desire a stronger statement from Mr. Buchanan." I also refer to the letter of the Hon. R. P. Letcher, who was the bosom friend of Mr. Clay. In writing to him upon the 27th of August, 1827, he says, in reference to the response of Mr. Buchanan to the charge of General Jackson:

"This answer is well put together: as they say in Connecticut, there is a great deal of good reading in Buck's reply. I am truly delighted with the manner in which Mr. Buchanan has acquitted himself."

I also refer to the biography of Mr. Clay, by his personal and political friend, and the now leading know-nothing editor in Kentucky, George D. Prentiss, (who is now falsifying himself by joining in this charge,) in which he says, in referring to the bargain-and-bribe imputation, "that General Andrew Jackson gave up the name of Mr. Buchanan as his witness." He adds that "Mr. Buchanan, however, was an honorable man, and hesitated not to say publicly that he had never made to General Jackson the overtures in question, or any that bore the least resemblance to them." Sir, without quoting further, he rests the justification of Mr. Clay upon the testimony of Mr. Buchanan. If gentlemen need any further evidence to disprove Mr. Buchanan's connexion with that charge, I refer them to Mr. James B. Clay, the son of the "Sage of Ashland," who now lives at that consecrated home of his distinguished father, the Mecca of the many admirers of that truly great man.

Mr. Chairman, it has been charged that Mr. Buchanan advocated the reduction of the wages of the laboring classes to ten cents per day in a speech in the United States Senate. All I have to say to that is, that I defy any gentleman to produce any speech which Mr. Buchanan ever made during his life-time that ever contained any such sentiment. It is a miserable slander, sir. He has always been the consistent and eloquent advocate of the dignity of labor, and the appreciation of its value. When, sir, the charge was made, he said in the Senate, "that such an imputation was a flagitious misrepresentation of my remarks." As to the other "pie-bald" slander about his saying that if he had a drop of democratic blood in his veins he would let it out, I have only to remark that no man can prove upon him the speaking of such a sentiment. It was a false slander got up to effect his defeat for Congress. It has been disproved by the respectable citizens of his country, who have grown up with him, and who brand with infamy, and charge as a base, unmitigated lie, the whole contents of that charge.

Mr. Chairman, the know-nothing party has been a miserable failure. It appeared upon the stage promising great things to the country. Its deluded followers rushed to the embrace of the wily politicians who controlled it, as if they were some guardian angels, especially designated by Providence to save the country from impending danger. They started, sir, with the declaration that the corruption of the old whig and democratic parties had become so great that there was a necessity for the new organization, to cleanse the Augean stables of the impurities which had by those old parties been accumulated in them. They declared that their mission was to destroy the wild hunt after office. We have only to look at the avidity with which the adherents of this party endeavored to reach all the offices, high and low, in municipal, county, and State elections, to prove how utterly false to that pledge has been their constant action. They promised to give to the country officers of higher conservatism and purer political morality than any that had ever before filled public positions. We have only to look at the members of this party on this floor, *the highly conservative ones* who voted for Mr. BAXTER, the profligacy with which they have voted away the public lands and the public moneys, and the intensity of the sectionalism which they have produced in the country, to show a shameful violation of that promise. They promised us purity in elections and full protection to the right of suffrage. This was declared by my colleague [Mr. H. MARSHALL] and the gentleman from New York [Mr. VANCE] to be the especial mission of the American party. Then, sir, how shamefully has its purpose been perverted! Were the riots at St. Louis, New Orleans, New Albany, Cincinnati, and last, not least, Louisville, where the ballot-boxes were shut out from the reach of citizens, where property was destroyed, where innocent men were murdered, an evidence of their desire to purify the ballot-box? They prostituted it, sir, but did not purify it. The history of these riots establishes a conclusive answer to that promise of the American party, showing, too, that in that respect they stand convicted of superlatively disregarding their promises. Congress, they told the people, had the right to regulate suffrage, and that, if they were elected to the national legislature, they would pass laws prohibiting alien suffrage in the States; and, yet, sir, not one of them has been verdant enough to make such a proposition here, because they know that the regulation of suffrage is vested in the States exclusively, and not in Congress. They proclaimed against the immigration of foreign paupers and convicts. That abuse was to be corrected by them in Congress. Equally lacking as in the other case is Congress in power to prevent such immigration. That power is also vested in the States; and every State, where there is a possibility of a convict or felon getting into the country, has stringent laws preventing their immigration. And where paupers come in, the emigrant tax exceeds the amount necessary to support all the poor-

houses for foreign and native paupers in the country. The proscription of Catholics was not to be by positive enactment, but through the ballot-box, and in the dispensation of patronage. The first know-nothing official elected under this Congress, offered the best office in his gift to a Catholic; but he would not take it. They were to extend the naturalization laws. My colleague from the Louisville district [Mr. HENRY MARSHALL] had the floor assigned him on the 21st of July, to report a bill from the Committee on the Judiciary to establish a uniform system of naturalization. Unanimous consent was accorded to him for that purpose; and when he reported it, instead of having it considered at once, by moving to lay it on its passage, he moved to refer it to the Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union, which was done, and where he knows as well as I do it will never be reached. The truth is, Mr. Chairman, this cry of abuses clamored throughout the country, to defend the necessity of the American organization, was for political effect, and was not to meet any pressing exigencies that existed. Yes, sir, this American party has performed its true mission, which was to do nothing; and it has done nothing. Office was the incentive that produced its formation. It is now but winging away a brief and unenviable existence. Marked as has been its career by the introduction of the worst species of public morals in the country, and the begetting of some of the most disgraceful events, it will pass away unwept for and unnoticed. It has no further claims upon the people, and will be consigned by the South in the next election to a grave from which there will be no resurrection.

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